



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Division of Performance and Accountability
2010-2011**

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

North Queens Community High School

25Q792

141-25 77 Road

Queens

NY 11367

Principal: Winston McCarthy

Dates of review: January 6 - 7, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Juan Mendez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

North Queens Community is a high school with 195 students from grade 9 through grade 12. The school population comprises 43% Black, 38% Hispanic, 10% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 71%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Project-based learning provides students the opportunity to undertake research, solve problems that promote active engagement and improved academic learning.
 - Teachers work together to plan lessons that are differentiated according to specific student learning needs. In an English class students were grouped by learning styles learning levels based on interim assessments. In a living environment class, students were assigned data-driven differentiated projects regarding the function and structure of plant and animal cells. Furthermore, higher order thinking and active engagement are evident in the project-based student work across classrooms. In an integrated algebra class, students worked in pairs on a representation and application of systems of linear equations. In an English class, during small group work students developed a hypothesis to explain how and why the character's action caused her illness. Students reported back to the class describing what challenged their perspective. As a result, academic growth is improved for all students.
- The principal makes informed organizational decisions that support the academic needs of all students leveraging gains in student achievement.
 - Teacher assignments and programs provide common planning time to focus on the learning needs of student cohorts through collaborative inquiry, and engage in professional development to improve school wide instructional practice. Fifty five minute class periods allow time for student groups to engage in challenging lessons to develop higher levels of understanding. Courses are structured into trimesters to focus opportunities for credit accumulation. As a result, timely credit accumulation is improving.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and parents who feel valued and who take pride in being part of the school community.
 - The school collaborates with a social service agency that helps to create a small, personalized learning environment to support students' academic and personal growth. The agency is responsible for supporting new students, programming, student internships, attendance outreach, counseling and working with families. This tailored support improves student success throughout high school.
 - Students speak highly of the support they receive by both advocate counselors and teachers. Students' work and voices demonstrate high levels of interest, engagement and participation in student focused learning. Teachers are approachable and show overall interest in the success of their students.
- Parents are key partners in their child's education and are kept well informed of school programs and their child's needs in order to support their learning.

- Parents appreciate the high level of communication with all staff. They receive phone calls when students are absent from school and are provided online access to students' academic, behavior and attendance records. Work is mailed to the home when students cannot attend. Bi-weekly benchmark report cards are mailed home and later reviewed with parents at individual meetings with advocate counselors. As a result, parents are committed to the school's goals and have high expectations for their children's success.
- School leaders, faculty and other support staff involve families in important school activities that result in high levels of parental involvement and participation. Parents are invited to scheduled guidance conferences and feel supported by both teachers and advocate counselors. Frequent workshops are scheduled giving parents the necessary supports for student success. PowerSchool training is regularly provided to parents that results in increased parental involvement.
- School leaders have established effective systems for monitoring teaching and learning with a clear focus on improving instructional practices.
 - School leaders and the instructional coach collect and review unit and lesson plans as well as assessments to determine levels of alignment with school-wide instructional goals. Regular observations and feedback support teacher development and facilitate alignment of classroom practices with data on student needs. As a result, teacher practices and resulting student outcomes are improving.
 - School leaders provide mentoring and coaching that focus on pedagogy and content knowledge to improve instructional planning and practice. The principal collaborates with teachers to customize their professional development based on classroom observations and an evaluation of student performance. Individual annual goals are set for each teacher and they monitor their own progress. Periodic discussions with the principal provide evidence of growth in areas such as lesson plan, classroom routines, rubrics and student projects. Teacher teaming and coaching opportunities further enhance capacity through a distributed leadership model.
- Effective student support services and collaborations provide students with a wide range of opportunities to grow personally and academically.
 - New teachers are offered professional development and coaching in classroom management to support a school environment that is conducive to learning. A respectful and welcoming tone at the school is nurtured by the quality of teacher and student interaction. Furthermore, the school has developed partnerships to provide targeted support services for students and families, during the day and/or after school. Youth development is seamlessly integrated through a close partnership with the SCO Family Services social service agency. Advocate counselors work closely with teachers to support individual students in their academic, social and personal development. They are also the main contact person for students and families. Students remain with the same advocate counselor throughout their time at the school. This nurturing environment supports students to achieve higher progress levels.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine curriculum so that challenging academic tasks support specific needs of all learners and ensure gains in student achievement.
 - Although rigorous tasks and higher order thinking are emphasized, it is not yet embedded across all grades and subject areas through well-developed school curricula. While most tasks engage and challenge a diversity of learners, they are not yet tailored to individual and groups of students based on data trends and formative assessments limiting informed instructional adjustments.
- Establish greater consistency and coherence across classrooms in formative data collection and analysis to better meet individual student needs and support targeted instruction.
 - Teachers set proficiency targets through the creation of assessments for individual units of study. However, these assessments are not developed by teams to prioritize specific standards and do not yet provide precise and actionable feedback regarding student. Therefore, the school's ability to consistently identify root causes for student's lack of progress is limited.
 - Teacher teams supplement summative data analysis by examining Periodic assessments and classroom data. However, they have not yet consistently examined data to track progress of student subgroups and make adjustments in curricular decisions. This hampers sufficient growth in student learning.
- Further refine student education plans to include precise short and long term learning goals that explicitly identify next steps to improve outcomes.
 - Individual and teacher teams have goal setting structures to set specific interim and annual benchmarks for individual and groups of students included in their area of responsibility. However, their analysis of student assessment results is not yet consistent and precise enough to set specific and differentiated annual and interim goals. This limits student progress.
- Formalize systems to evaluate and revise processes and programs within the school that lead to effective professional collaborations.
 - School leaders and teachers are working together to determine more effective ways to adopt an outcome-based grading policy and offer feedback on academic progress to students. However, not all faculty have genuine ownership of this goal-setting process to improve student achievement.
 - Inquiry teams meet regularly to monitor important school wide goals such as attendance, credit accumulation, graduation, and college and career readiness. Systems to evaluate the effectiveness of their impact on school-wide improvement of instructional practice and goal achievement is not yet consistent to ensure student progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School Name: North Queens Community High School	UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			X	
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			X	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			X	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X	
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			X	
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			X	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	

Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?			X				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			X				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				X			
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?			X				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			X				
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?			X				
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X			
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?			X				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed